



THE IMPACT OF DEVOLUTION ON WOMEN AND GIRLS IN KENYA

POPULAR VERSION



UN WOMEN IS THE UN ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN. A GLOBAL CHAMPION FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS, UN WOMEN WAS ESTABLISHED TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS ON MEETING THEIR NEEDS WORLDWIDE.

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide. It works globally to make the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals a reality for women and girls and stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on four strategic priorities: Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems; Women have income, security, decent work and economic autonomy; All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence; Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and humanitarian action. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.

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Devolution has opened (increased) opportunities for women and other previously marginalized groups to participate and engage in county-level planning, budgeting, and implementation, and ensured an opportunity for county governments to integrate gender-responsive mechanisms in development planning, budgeting, and implementation. However, much more still needs to be done to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment in Kenya.

The 2022 report, **The Impact of Devolution of Women and Girls**, produced by the **Council of Governors** (CoG) in partnership with **UN Women** and United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) as part of the UNDP, UNICEF, United Nations Joint Devolution Programme synthesizes and documents the impact of devolution on women and girls in select devolved sectors: **Education, Health, Agriculture, Water and Sanitation, and Urban Planning** across the 14 counties of the **United Nations Joint Devolution Programme, generously supported by the governments of Sweden, Finland, and Italy**. The chosen sectors have multiple effects on the lives of women and girls, and interventions and results are easily visible and quantifiable.

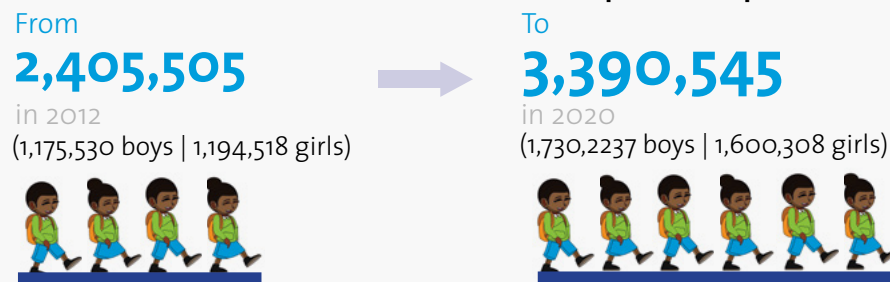
The 14 counties are Busia, Garissa, Isiolo, Kajiado, Kilifi, Lamu, Mandera, Marsabit, Narok, Samburu, Tana River, Turkana, Wajir and West Pokot. The findings of the report present a balanced perspective from independent analysis, resulting from in-depth interviews with county representatives and conversations with women and girls on the progress in meeting set out expectations, unfulfilled ambitions, and opportunities for the future, providing beneficial recommendations for possible adaptation in the 47 counties of Kenya.

The study used a mixed method that combined quantitative and qualitative methods including questionnaires, focus group discussions, semi structured interviews, case studies and participant observation. The assessment considered review of existing statistics, policy, and legal frameworks. Primary data was collected from the 14 counties. The study team interacted with state and non-state actors and listened to their views on how the County interventions have targeted programmes for women and girls, and therefore promoting Gender Equality. The beneficiaries consulted included women, women leaders, civil society organizations representatives and male champions supporting women's interventions.

EDUCATION



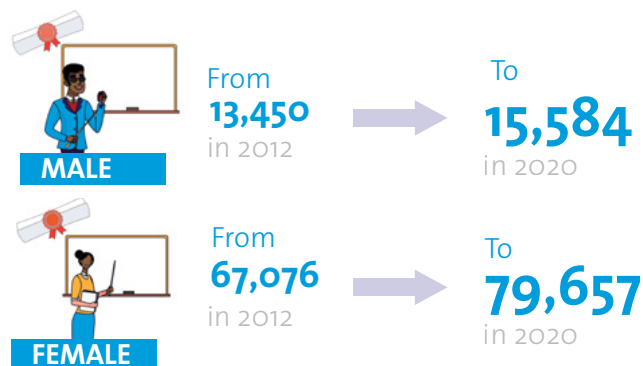
Increase in number of ECDE enrolment for both public and private



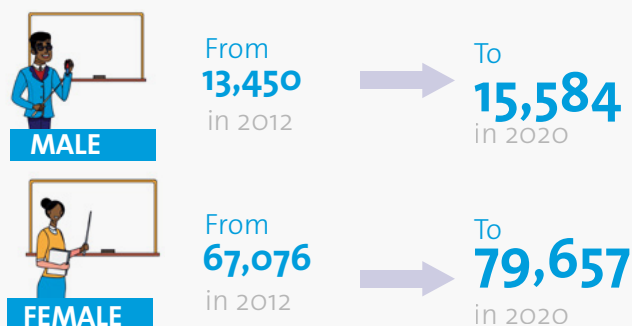
Vocational Training

- There is inconsistency in the uptake of the courses offered.
- Slow progress is recorded across all the counties since learners are not motivated.
- There is poor infrastructure in some counties with deserted classrooms.
- Girls drop out due to early unwanted pregnancies. Institutions do not offer rooms for lactating mothers for their babies.

Increase in number of Trained Teachers



Increase in number of Untrained teachers



- The results point to an increase in literacy levels, with gender parity almost achieved at that level.
- Male teachers making an entry into a long-time female-dominated career are visible.
- There are suitable investments by all counties in infrastructure and support systems through providing a hot meal or porridge for the pupils in some counties, i.e., Turkana, Busia, and Kajiado, among others



Kenya Demographic Health survey indicates that **2 out of every 10 girls** are pregnant between **1993 and 2014**.

The total number declined to **175,488** in 2019 and **151,433** in 2020

- Courses (mostly STEM-based) offered were also unattractive to girls who dropped out of school to get married or seek employment as casual employees, mainly as house helps or in small trading activities.

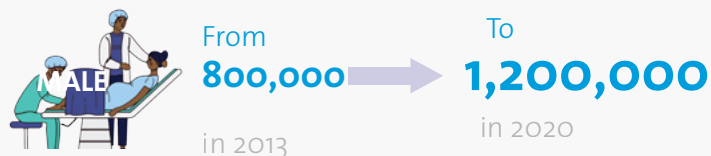
HEALTH



Health services are enhanced in all the 14 counties owing to sustained resource allocation averaging 30 % to support infrastructure development and human resource staff deployment. Consequently, **out-of-pocket expenses, walking distances and waiting time for women and girls have been reduced.**

More births in health facilities significantly reduce the maternal death rate during delivery.

Increase in number of health facility deliveries



- There is an increased number of health facilities and hospital bed capacities.
- There is a general **increase in registered health professionals per 100,000 population** for all cadres.
- COVID-19 slowed progress in 2019 and 2020.
- Health is made accessible by increased primary health care facilities, making services closer to the people.

AGRICULTURE



- Gender and **women-related statistics were scarce.**
- All counties showed significant engagement in **improved farming.**
- Counties offered **subsidies to farmers by way of seeds and fertilizers.** Others like Turkana offered ward-level tractors to help reduce farmers' costs in farming.
- **Significant investments in livestock farming** point to an increase nationally in milk supply and animals availed to slaughterhouses for meat.
- Poor, erratic, and harsh changes in climate negatively impacted the investment in agriculture, with **most counties suffering drought.**
- There is a **minimal investment in irrigation** for agriculture for most counties.
- **COVID-19 impacted the export** of some goods –farmers suffered unquantifiable losses.

WATER AND SANITATION

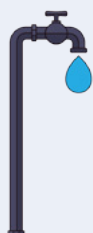


- **There is improved water access in Urban areas through the establishment of Water Service Providers (WSPs)** and in rural areas through partnerships aimed at rehabilitating, maintaining, and establishing equipped and non-equipped water sources.
- **Water coverage** currently stands at **59% in urban** and urbanizing areas covered by Water Service Providers **up from 47%** in 2010 attributed to improved investments in water resources in Urban areas through establishment of water service providers.
- **Access to water and sanitation has substantially improved** in all the 14 counties in rural areas through partnerships aimed at rehabilitating, maintaining, and establishing protected and non-protected water sources.

In 2015

Access to improved water sources

82% urban households **57%** rural households



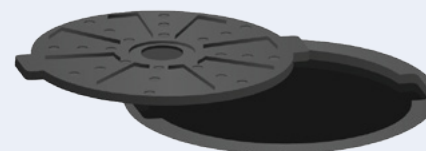
34.2%

average no. households in the country having piped water as a source of drinking water.

Sewer sanitation is available to only about **3.9 million** people in **26 counties**.

Sewerage coverage currently stands at **17%**, a marginal increase from the figure of 16% recorded last year.

Notably, **access to sewerage services has been declining**, with a figure of **19%** recorded in 2010 due to increased urbanization occasioned by devolution.

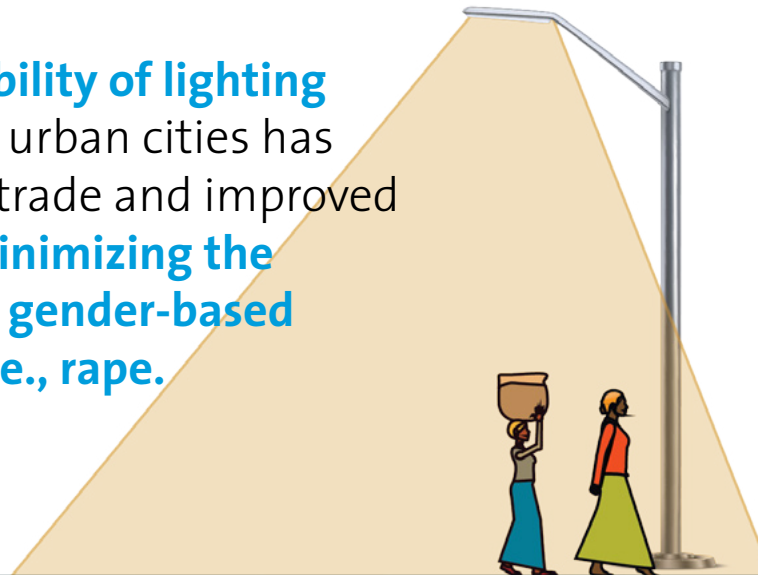


URBAN DEVELOPMENT



- **Municipalities have been established** to enhance the provision of services in urban areas.
- The subsequent resource allocation has led to an improved turnaround in response to demand for social services owing to increased urbanization in most business hubs across the 47 Counties.
- **The construction of markets has benefited women**, who are the majority of small-scale traders. For example, Samburu has constructed shades for women trading in Ushaga, while Turkana revamped the fish market, improving the value chain.

The **availability of lighting systems** in urban cities has enhanced trade and improved security, **minimizing the chances of gender-based violence, i.e., rape.**

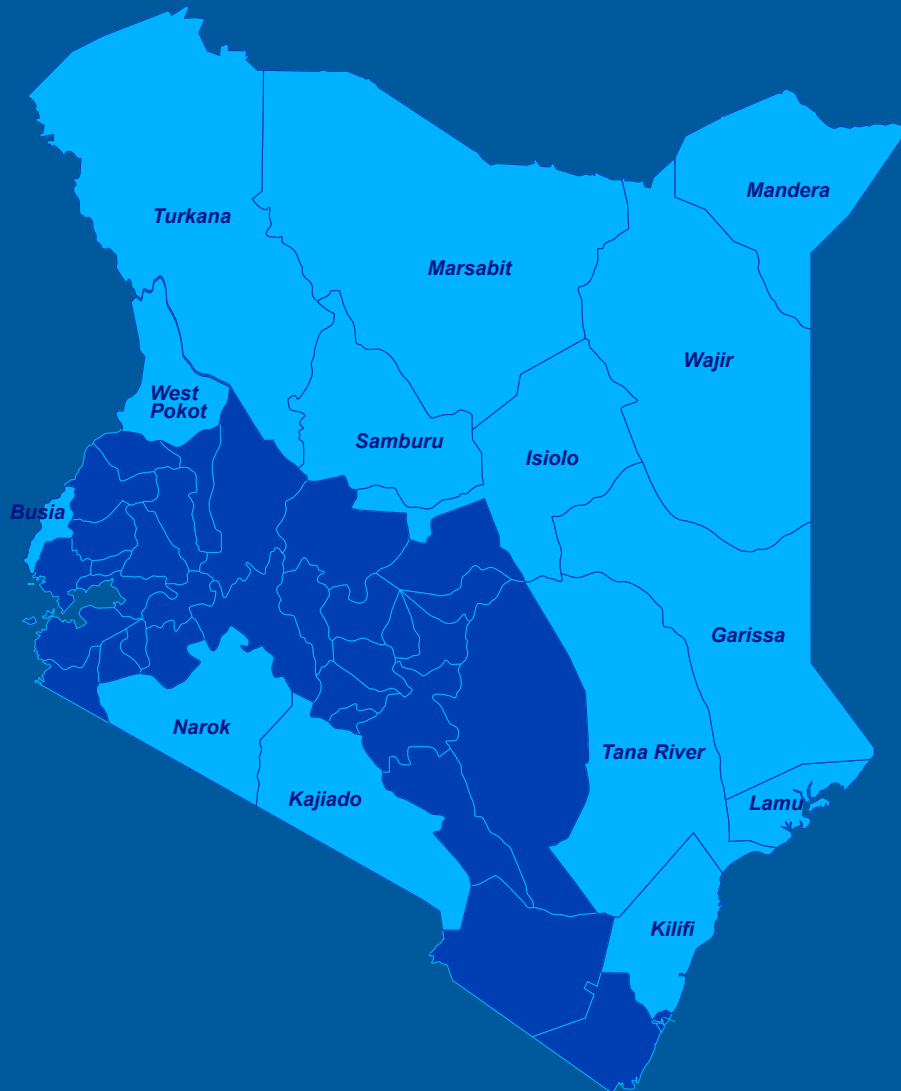


GENERAL CHALLENGES

- There was a **delay in implementing the Intergovernmental relationship agreement of 2019** in relation to the Consultative Framework on gender between the national (State Department of Gender) and County Governments (CoG).
- Lack of **Gender Responsive Indicators** for programming.
- There is **limited expertise in gender mainstreaming** and inclusion and diversity in programming at the county level.
- There are **limited tools to implement and monitor progress on gender equality** and the empowerment of women and girls.
- **Budgets** for implementing gender and women interventions are unavailable.
- Dealing with **gender and inclusion issues as 'add on'** and not substantial interventions with clear budgets.
- There is **insufficient understanding of affirmative action by county officials**, and therefore it is not embraced.
- **Gender continuous assessment and reward** schemes are not considered powerful tools for gender mainstreaming.
- Counties **lack the ability and capacity to collect data disaggregated** by sex, age, and ability, among other variables.
- There are **weak reporting guidelines on Gender Performance Contracting** to the national Government.
- **Non-adoption and use of the Sessional Paper No. 2 of 2019** on National Policy on Gender and Development by county Governments.
- **Overreliance on financial support from development partners** and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) on matters of gender and women.

LOOKING FORWARD

- **Create a strong County Gender Department** with adequate staff and budget provisions for enhanced gender mainstreaming and inclusive programming towards improved service delivery in all the County Departments.
- **Improve Capacities of Gender Departments** as county coordination Mechanisms to mainstream and integrate gender into the development agenda in all county thematic areas of focus.
- **Improve Coordination and Capacity through Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting** by training the County Officers responsible for Planning and Finance and all Heads of Departments on Gender mainstreaming and its importance in Planning, implementation, and monitoring results; in all planned interventions and reporting results.
- **Develop and disseminate Gender Tools for Effective Gender Mainstreaming in Programming** to enhance Implementation and Monitoring Progress and Reporting on identified Gender Indicators, including Reporting on the Gender Performance Contracting indicators.
- **Promote Planning and Implementation through Establishing Gender Responsive Sector Baselines** and Developing Tools for Reporting Progress using Gender Statistics and Sex disaggregated Data.
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- **Foster partnership, collaboration and coordination mechanisms for gender and inclusion support accountability** through adopting a participatory Gender Action Plan (GAP). The county governments need to have a well-structured and coordinated manner of working with their partners. The partners include development partners, the private sector, and civil society organizations (CSOs).
- **Counties need to enhance their strategies to promote gender equality and empowerment of women and girls** through a participatory engagement with communities of women and girls to establish their actual needs and provide informed interventions for lasting and sustainable solutions.
- **Promote Gender Statistics and disaggregated data;** The county governments should consider developing gender-responsive indicators to capture gender statistics. Counties lack the ability and capacity to collect data disaggregated by sex, age, and ability, among other variables. There is also limited information on how to provide raw institutional data to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) from counties on matters of gender. There are also no indicators for counties to undertake comparability studies between counties to determine how they compare with one another.
- **County governments should consider gender continuous assessment and reward schemes** which are powerful tools for gender mainstreaming.



A CLOSER LOOK AT THE COUNTIES

An assessment of the impact of Devolution on Women and Girls tells a story of opportunities and adversity. On average, Kenyans have more access to Health services, Education, technical skills, Water, and Sanitation than they did before Devolution. Yet, at the same time, a significant fraction of the population in rural areas continues to yearn for improved access to Sanitation, Agricultural input and support services, and opportunities to participate in their development fully.

Below are highlights of successes across the 14 Counties

HEALTH

At the onset of devolution, 6 of the counties being assessed (**Mandera, Wajir, Turkana, Marsabit, Isiolo, Lamu**) are among those with the 15 highest maternal mortality burden, which **accounts for 98.7% of all maternal deaths in Kenya**. However, since devolution owing to investments in healthcare, the **Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) has reduced from 488 in 2008/09, to 362 per 100,000 live births in 2014, with the 14 counties also making considerable progress.**

- **Isiolo** is the only county that **has surpassed the national target at 29.6 inpatient beds per 10,000 population** with 80% occupancy. The maternity bed density stands at 13.3 per 1,00 pregnant women.
- **Mandera** has significantly reduced the **ratio of the doctor and nurse to population from 1:49,982 to 1:5,222**. This has reduced runaway MMR from 3795/100,000 live births to 588/100,000 live births.



Mothers at the Newborn Unit practice Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC); a method of care for preterm infants.

The method refers to the practice of providing early, continuous, prolonged skin-to-skin contact between mother and baby, exclusive breast milk feeding, and follow-up care with high-risk newborns. It has shown to decrease mortality and morbidity in preterm and low birth weight infants by providing protection from infection; regulating temperature, breathing, and brain activity; and encouraging mother-baby bonding.

“ I encourage women to have their deliveries at the hospital because they are guaranteed good services, and the doctors can quickly attend to them in an emergency.

Catherine Karambu, 28, Isiolo County



“ It is our joy when we take care of the little ones and see them improve. We give our best to ensure that every neonate who comes to the Newborn Health Unit goes home healthy. We may not have all the essential equipment for adequate newborn care yet, but we know from all the referrals we get and families' happy smiles and gratitude when they leave with their healthy babies that we are doing well in Kilifi.

Priscillar Makazi, In charge Newborn Unit, Kilifi County Hospital





“ I am a mother of three. When I gave birth to my first child at Isiolo General Hospital, I knew I would be back. You hear stories about women lacking or sharing beds in hospitals, but that is not the case here. It is one of the reasons I chose to come here, leaving other clinics nearer home. The doctors are also kind and friendly.

Priscilla Murungi, Isiolo County

EDUCATION

Lamu has the largest **education fund** since devolution began, with **Ksh250 million in scholarships and bursaries** distributed across the county every financial year, up from Ksh40 million in 2017. **Lamu's Education Scholarship & Bursaries Fund** has assisted over 7,000 worthy students in completing high school, college, and university, with 80% being girls.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

- **Kajiado** has established a scheme of service for **ECDE teachers** employing **700 on permanent terms**.
- **Kilifi County** has **1550 public ECD centres** and **773 privately** owned ECD centres with a total enrolment of 58,628. **Narok County** has **695 ECDE** centres distributed across sub-counties, with an enrolment of **69,030 learners** and **1,388 ECDE caregivers** spread across the count, ranking second after Kilifi. **Mandera County** has **425 centres**.

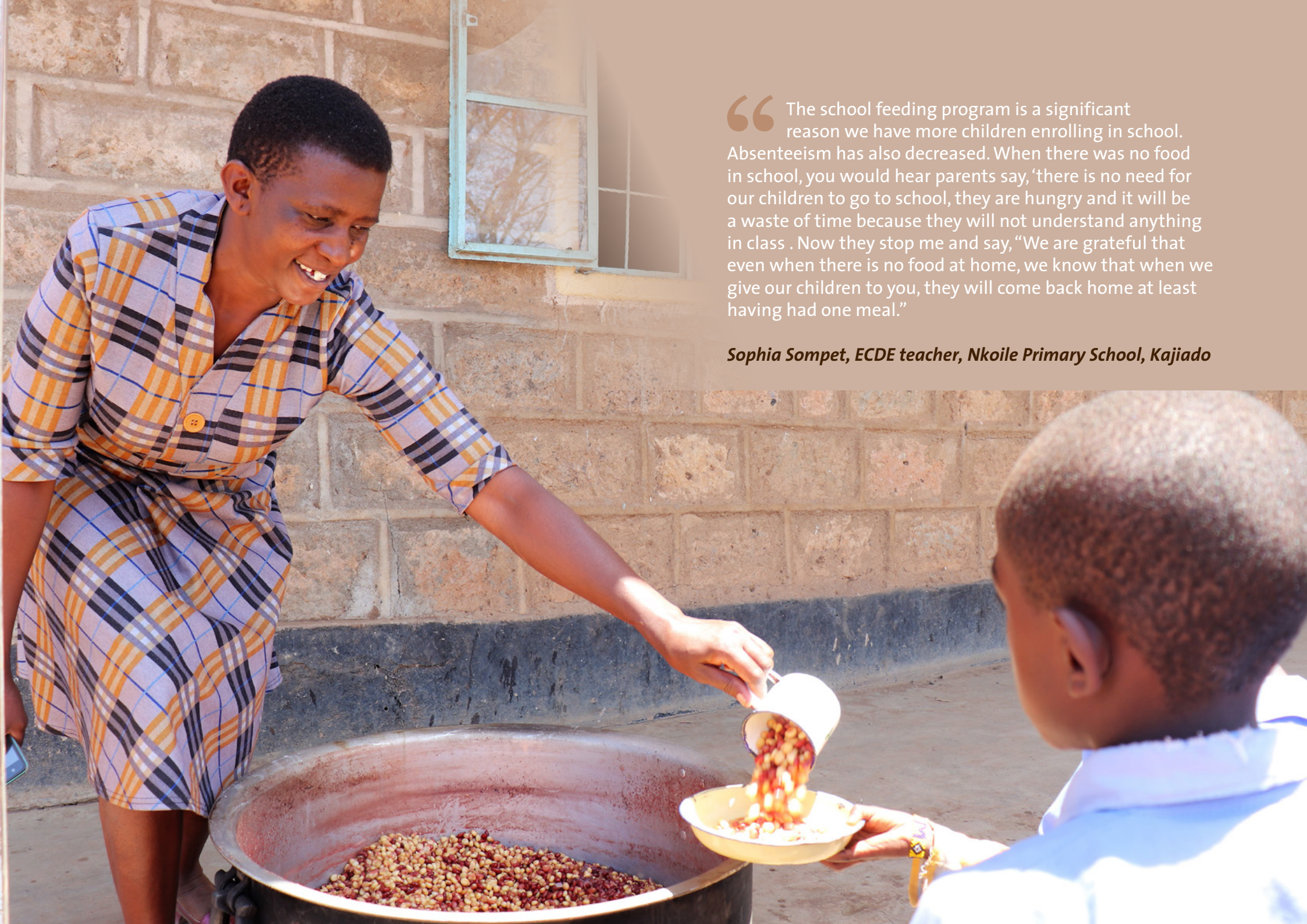
“It has always been my dream to be a teacher. I admired how my father would come home with many books, marking students work. I wanted to be like him but to focus on teaching the very young children. I am happy now that there are many women teachers, especially in Early Childhood Education. I hope ECDE teachers can get further training to improve our skills, especially those of us who teach in Special Needs Education institutions, to enable us to serve our children better.

Jane Kipayio, ECDE teacher, AIC Child Care Centre, Kajiado





The school feeding programme in Kajiado and other Arid and Semi Arid Counties has increased enrolment in public primary schools and relief to children who missed school because of lack of food.

A woman with short dark hair, wearing a plaid dress with orange, blue, and white patterns, is smiling as she serves food. She is using a small white cup to pour a mixture of red and yellow beans or lentils from a large, shallow metal pot. A young child, seen from the back, is holding a yellow bowl to receive the food. The background is a light-colored stone wall with a window that has a blue frame. The scene is outdoors, and the lighting is bright, suggesting it is daytime.

“ The school feeding program is a significant reason we have more children enrolling in school. Absenteeism has also decreased. When there was no food in school, you would hear parents say, ‘there is no need for our children to go to school, they are hungry and it will be a waste of time because they will not understand anything in class . Now they stop me and say, “We are grateful that even when there is no food at home, we know that when we give our children to you, they will come back home at least having had one meal.”’

Sophia Sompot, ECDE teacher, Nkoile Primary School, Kajiado

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- **Busia County** has established a total of **25 VTCs** institutions to date.
- **Isiolo** is the **first county to launch a Youth Innovation Centre**: a business hub, an ICT innovation centre, and music, art, and film incubation.
- **Tana River** is the **second county to establish a Youth innovation centre** that can accommodate 100 boarding students and 125 teachers living in the campus quarters. The centre has a fully equipped ICT facility, a media facility, hydroponic farms, and fish ponds to support technological innovations.
- **Isiolo** has **four vocational centres** served by 29 instructors.

“ I enjoy preparing good food. My family has always told me that I prepare the tastiest food home. At the TVET centre, I have learnt professional skills which I may never have learnt at home. For example, I now know how to better present food at the table and how to market my food business after I leave school. I am grateful that my career aligns with my passion.

Valentine Salama Dullu, 19, Food and Beverages student, Hola Vocational Training Centre , Tana River County





“ I studied ICT at a local university in Kenya and now teach it here at Hola Vocational Training Centre. I am also a champion for women’s and girls’ empowerment and believe in the power of ICT to transform lives! Through ICT, women and girls have a chance to learn and tap into many resources online that can help them earn a living. Additionally, we can interact with the rest of the world online and have bigger dreams knowing that anything is possible. We expand our worldviews from only understanding what is happening around us to being informed and gathering knowledge from around the world.

Naima Maro, 20, ICT Trainer, Hola Vocational Training Centre, Tana River County

Photo: Nasra Salah and her instructor Naima Maro



“ I came here to learn fashion and design, but what I like about the TVET center is that they also offer Information, Communication and Technology as a general course that anyone can do. So now, I am a Fashion and Design and ICT student. I plan to set up a big shop and be known as the best fashion designer in Tana River County! I could also sell some clothes online, but I know I want to make clothes for the women and girls of Tana River County. Men and boys too, but primarily lovely designs for women and girls!

Nasra Salah, 18. Fashion Design and ICT student, Hola Vocational Training Centre, Tana River County

WATER AND SANITATION

- **All the assessed counties have established Water Service Providers (WSPs)** to operate publicly owned infrastructure for water delivery services, generating fees from tariffs and new connections and re-connections. The WSPs have greatly improved coverage and reduced walking distances and waiting time.
- **Mandera County has six urban, six institutional and 94 rural water supply schemes.** The County has complemented the supply in water-starved areas with water bowzers with an estimated 120 active water trucking sites. **These sites are supported by underground water storage tanks ranging from 300,000 to 600,000 litres, which have come in handy during drought.** In addition, through hydrological surveys and appropriate technology, the County has harnessed water into pans with a capacity of 20,000 to 30,000 litres. The County plans to expand the pans to between 60,000 and 100,000 litres in relation to demands.



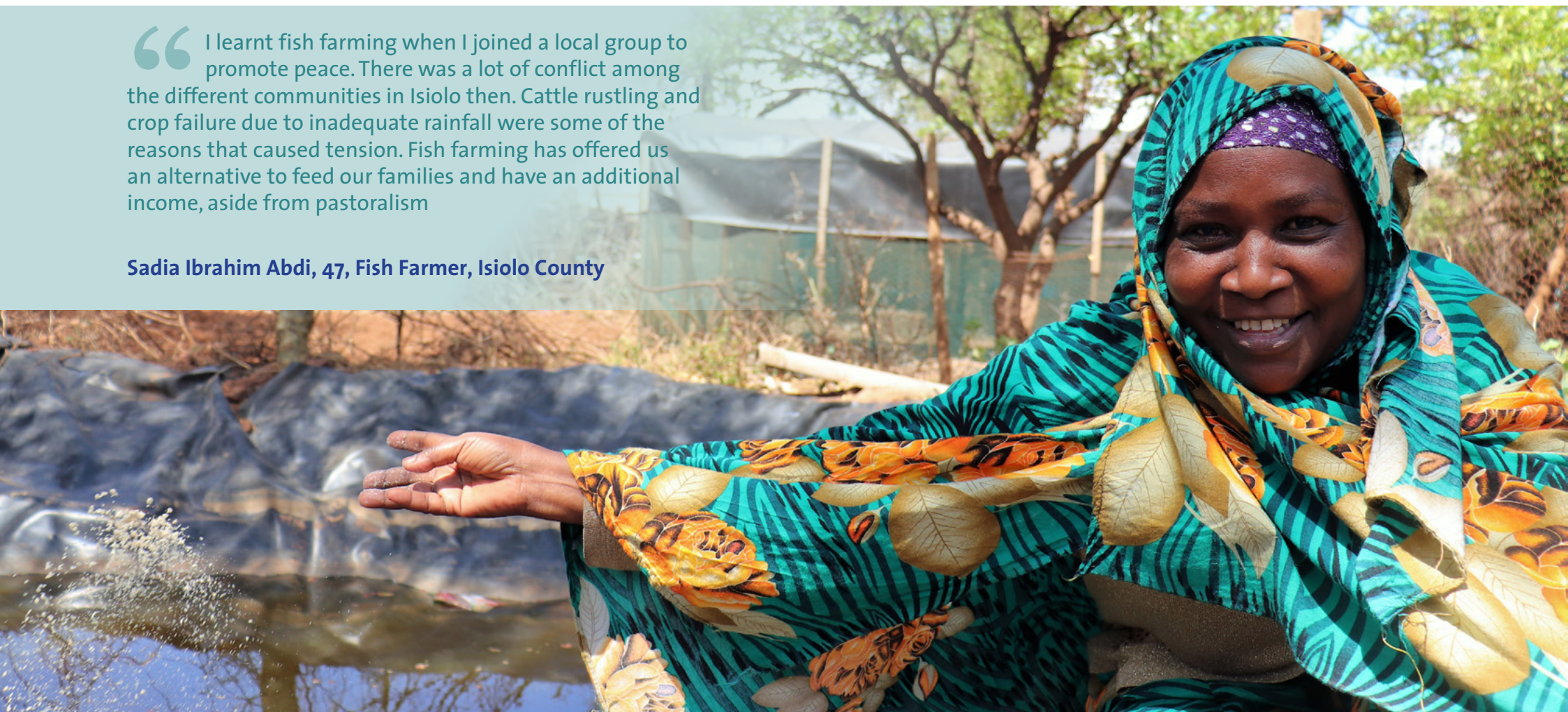
Photo| File| Nation Media Group

AGRICULTURE

- In **Isiolo**, owing to livestock losses due to prolonged drought and erratic and unpredictable rainfall, **fish farming is becoming a viable alternative for women**. The maturation period for the fish (6 to 9 months) is attractive, and the fish farms are also less labour intensive. Partners such as the World Food Programme (WFP) have provided the farmers with 400 catfish fingerlings and 1200 tilapia fingerlings.
- **Garissa** has invested in **extension services**, with agricultural extension staff being 53 (29 men and 24 women) while livestock staff are 132 (114 men and 18 women).
- The assessed counties have linked **women-led and Persons with Disability (PWD) self-help groups to funding for their micro-projects through the Kenya Climate Smart Agriculture Project (KCSAP)**.

“ I learnt fish farming when I joined a local group to promote peace. There was a lot of conflict among the different communities in Isiolo then. Cattle rustling and crop failure due to inadequate rainfall were some of the reasons that caused tension. Fish farming has offered us an alternative to feed our families and have an additional income, aside from pastoralism

Sadia Ibrahim Abdi, 47, Fish Farmer, Isiolo County



URBAN PLANNING, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

- **All the assessed counties have gazetted municipalities with a functional gender-balanced Board.**
- Sustainable Urban Economic Development Programme has developed an Urban Economic Plan Which Identifies and prepares value chain projects that can be considered further in terms of their feasibility and bankability.
- **Mandera Municipality** has carried out a **digital topographical mapping for 2015-2035** and seeks to position Mandera Municipality as an inclusive and safe urban area considering dynamics for women in urban areas. The plan also safeguards its resources and promotes investments with adequate facilities for a prosperous population.
- All the Counties through the Kenya Urban Support project have undertaken urban projects focused on sewerage, drainage, street lighting, and solid waste management following concerted efforts to respond to increased urbanization.



A section of Mandera Town. Photo | Mandera County Government



This popular version was produced by UN Women in partnership with the Council of Governors as part of the Joint Devolution Programme supported by Sweden, Finland, and Italy. The programme is implemented by UN Women, UNICEF and UNDP.



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